

John Catron to Andrew Jackson, June 8, 1836, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

JOHN CATRON TO JACKSON.

Nashville, June 8, 1836.

My dear Sir: Permit me to congratulate you on the prospect that the concluding year of your Administration is to be prosperous. The Indian disturbances will afford the occasion for the removal of this population beyond the M'pi, including the Cherokees I hope. And our relations with Texas, resting on our great Slave and Indian border, may be so settled as to leave no further cause of apprehension from the *poor* Mexicans, or the (much to be dreaded) *English*. The savage barbarities of murdering Fanning¹ and his core, *after a capitulation*, has so enraged the people of this country, that they were raising men openly to fight St. Anna. Had Houston's army not conquered him, Tennessee, Missi. and Louisiana would, within the next nine months. I heard from Houston this morning. He was still at N. orleans. The chances are he will not die of his wound. The craven Mexicans lay down their arms in utter terror wherever over-taken, and I hold Texas as essentially severed from Mexico at present as the U.S. were from G. Brittain after Cornwallis's Capture at York. The theory of her Governm't is the same as ours: Her Constitution adopted in March, almost a literal copy. Her citizens have more experience in its execution than ours had for the first ten years after its being put into operation; and I need not be told this people are a set of scape-graces from Justice. Their convention from 70,000 people, had more talent of all sorts, than had ours last year taken from 800,000. I know not on Earth, and never have heard of, so small a community so well able

1 James W. Fannin, massacred at Goliad, with nearly 400 men, Mar. 27, 1836.

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to take care of itself; and they will be doubled by christmus, and three times their now numbers in next 12 mo. What is to prevent their Elections and government going on well this Summer? Surely not the poor mongrel Mexicans! That there is more danger of Texas conquering Mexico, than the reverse, admits of no doubt. Sir the project is a *great* favourite here. Last Saturday our fr'd Gnl. Dunlop came to me to aid in geting \$25,000 to take troops to Texas. I refused, and we held him back. By monday Morning the order for the Creek Service came, and Houston's official report, and the certainty that the Mexicans were flying the Country. This stopped it. Nothing else could. I have seen some half dozen shake their heads, but the courage to say *no* , is not found. And if any member of Congress should vote against Texas Independence his political prospects would be ruined. This is all perfectly natural. The blight and horror that over-came the community on hearing of the butchery at the taking of the Alamo, and the shooting of our young men on the coast, was great: But the cold-blooded murder of upwards of 400, (Fanning's men, and others) at one time, and burning of them half alive, has put this community into a worse humour than did the taking of Fort Mimms in 1813. Nor is the fever going to cool soon. The men under thirty five, *and all the women* , are for having St. Anna shot, and the Texas *Eagle* planted on his Capital. I have been in Mississippi twice, and Louisana once this spring, and am very sure if this war continues between Mexico and Texas for one year more, that an Army from the west, the valley of the Mp'i, will march upon the City of Mexico. That power will call to its aid England of course, and of course, England will do in Mexico as she has done in India, govern it, and govern the Gulf of Mexico, and mouth of the Mp'i. For us it shurely would be better to cause Mexico, and Texas to treat, and for us to treat with Texas, fixing the western boundary, short perhaps of the Rio Grande Del Norte, but not much.

Again, No European power should be permitted to gain a footing in Mexico. This feeble and worthless people is our safest neighbour. If the Independence of Texas is recognized by our government, then Texas can be controlled by us. This alone will end the war. We can co-erce both sides to peace. Say to the Mexicans, stand off, to the Texians, hold in!

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This foreign Govt. is too near the Mississippi, our boundary must be pushed westward if possible.

Most sincerely, and affectionately, y'r fr'd.